



OVERTURE.FOREVER. *A Lifetime of Encores for Everyone.*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. WHAT IS THE OVERTURE FOREVER CAMPAIGN?

A. The Overture Forever Campaign is a \$30 million combined fundraising campaign to invest in the current capital needs while growing the endowment. Together, they will ensure Overture remains a vibrant Center where everyone is welcome, engaged, and challenged through the arts.

Q. WHAT OUTCOME ARE YOU TRYING TO ACHIEVE WITH THE OVERTURE FOREVER CAMPAIGN?

A. Ten million of this effort will support the The Sandra Gajic Capital Fund, which will address major projects over the next 5–10 years. These critical projects include replacing Overture's 26 roofs, updating theatre rigging, architectural lighting, and numerous ventilation systems.

The remaining \$20 million will add ongoing funding to the existing capital endowment fund. In order for the next generation to have the same Overture experiences that we are accustomed to we will need to rely on this sustainable funding option.

Q. HOW HAVE YOU EVALUATED THE CAPITAL NEEDS FOR THE OVERTURE CENTER?

A. Overture Center retained an outside firm, McKinstry, to conduct a facility audit. McKinstry, found the building to be in good condition and has been very well maintained, especially on the current budget. However, they did identify projects that will need to be updated or replaced as part of the capital replacement lifecycle for the next 30 years.

Q. HAVE FUNDS BEEN RAISED ALREADY FOR THIS EFFORT?

A. Yes, close to \$22 million has been raised in the quiet phase of the campaign. These funds have already allowed us to complete a restoration on the exterior building envelope, multiple roof replacements and repairs, and replace the fire curtain and stage lighting for safer performances in Overture Hall. In July 2024 we are beginning the public phase of the campaign and will be reaching out to the entire community to educate and ask for support for our Endowment Campaign.

Q. WHAT IS AN ENDOWMENT FUND? WHY DO WE NEED ONE?

A. An endowment fund, quite simply, is money set aside (invested) to earn interest income. Most often the corpus of Endowment is not touched and only the interest income is spent year after year. The Overture Endowment fund will be invested and will generate annual income that will help cover the cost of needed capital improvements year after year.

Q. HOW WILL THE ENDOWMENT BE INVESTED? HOW MUCH WILL IT EARN TO SUPPORT THE ANNUAL CAPITAL NEEDS OF OVERTURE?

A. The Endowment is invested according to the Overture Investment Policy and overseen by the Overture Investment Committee. Currently the Endowment is held at Trust Point Financial & Wealth Management out of LaCrosse, WI. The projected annual earnings is 4–5% which will provide anywhere between \$750,000–\$1 million.

Q. WAS AN ENDOWMENT ESTABLISHED WHEN OVERTURE WAS FIRST BUILT?

A. Initially an endowment was created but with the market crash in 2008 and debt to banks, much of the corpus was lost or utilized to pay off debt. At this time it was mutually agreed between the City of Madison and Overture Center that Overture should no longer be a managed entity.

Overture became an independent non-profit organization in 2010 and at that time needed to prioritize organizational efforts to develop a fundraising base to support general operations and expand its free and low-cost programming. As the organization approaches its 20th anniversary, Overture has established a strong community presence through ticketed performances, free and low-cost programs, and its place as the premiere center for local and touring arts activities. Now that these programming and operational foundations are set, Overture is poised to start focusing on its long-term sustainability by building an endowment.

Q. WHAT IS THE CITY/COUNTY ROLE IN SUPPORTING OVERTURE?

A. The City of Madison supports Overture Center through Room Tax allocation funding to support an operating grant to the Overture Center (average \$2 million annually). It is authorized by the Room Tax Commission, consistent with state law. The County provides \$10,000 per year. The State of Wisconsin does not provide any funding for Overture Center outside of Wisconsin Arts Board grants of approximately \$15,000 annually.

Q. HOW WILL FUNDRAISING EFFORTS FOR THIS CAMPAIGN EFFECT THE ANNUAL GIVING OF THE OVERTURE CENTER?

A. Campaigns are time-limited inspirational efforts. We encourage donors to consider a gift to the campaign in addition to their regular annual gift as annual giving provides vital operational support that allows the organization to fill programming budget gaps, take advantage of emerging opportunities, and maintain operational excellence. However, we do expect that donors may choose to decrease or discontinue making an annual gift while they prioritize a campaign gift in their philanthropic plans. We expect we may see a 10–20% decline in annual giving during the campaign effort.

Q. HOW HAS MAINTENANCE BEEN PAID FOR TO DATE?

A. Annual maintenance is included in the general operations budget. Capital replacement is supported by the Block 100 Foundation grant (\$250,000 annually) and 30% of the operating reserves. The remaining 70% of operating surplus has been designated to build a \$5 million cash reserve per the structural agreement with the City of Madison. While this capital investment structure is currently in place, it is not a good sustainable funding model.

The COVID-19 pandemic closed Overture for 18 months and the organization had to rely on its reserves and fundraising ensure the center's survival. Relying on reserves for capital investments puts Overture at risk should another challenge, including a building failure, take the center offline. The development of the Endowment and the Capital Investment Fund will offer additional funding sources outside of the those listed above.

Q. WHY CAN'T FUNDS FROM TICKET SALES COVER THE COST OF CAPITAL NEEDS?

A. Overture Center is a not-for-profit and its business model does not operate with a significant margin. Many of the unique amenities of the Overture Center make it complicated and expensive to maintain. The Overture Center

is a "Presenting Organization" not a "Producing Organization" which means that 95% of ticket costs go back to the performance organization (example: Disney for Lion King tickets). Additionally, Overture maintains a commitment to access to arts in our community. 40% of Overture's annual artistic experiences are provided to the community through free and low-cost programming. Ticket sales and annual contributions support these critical education and engagement programs.

Q. WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THIS PROJECT? HOW WILL THESE OUTCOMES BE MEASURED?

A. With the completion of this campaign, Overture will have long-term financial sustainability to meet the future capital needs of the organization. Overture has set organizational goals to maintain artistic and operational excellence to support and elevate the arts in our community. This includes a multi-year capital project plan and budget to prioritize projects based on operational impact, architectural integrity, and safety and security. Overture does not anticipate having to conduct a similar fundraising effort in the future as the residual of the endowment should suffice for capital needs. However, Overture will continue to encourage gifts to the endowment after the campaign, primarily through planned giving opportunities.

Q. HOW LONG WILL THE FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN RUN?

A. Until Spring-Summer 2025.

Q. HOW CAN I HELP?

A. The Overture Forever. For Everyone. Campaign will gratefully accept one-time gifts, multi-year pledges up to three years, gifts of stocks and securities. We will also consider planned gifts as an option for long term funding. Please contact Emily Gruenewald, Chief Development Officer at egruenewald@overture.org or 608-258-4157. Each contribution is tax deductible according to IRS standards.



OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS
201 STATE ST. | MADISON WI, 53703
WWW.OVERTURE.ORG/GIVE | 608.443.1733